



Developing A Flourishing Film Festival Workshop

October 19, 2018, Wichita, Kansas

Attendees Included: Representatives from East High School Feminist Club (Wichita), Free State Festival (Lawrence), Great Plains Theater (Abilene), Tallgrass Film Association (Wichita), Doc Sunback Festival (Mulvane), El Dorado Film Commission (El Dorado), Salina Arts Center (Salina), Manhattan Arts Center (Manhattan), Kansas International Film Festival (Overland Park), Hutchinson Community College (Hutchinson), Film Festival Alliance, Kansas Creative Arts Industries Commission (Topeka).

Summary: Delegates from more than 10 film festivals or organizations from across the state of Kansas, gathered for a half-day workshop in Wichita, Kansas during the 16th annual Tallgrass Film Festival. After a brief introduction, wherein attendees briefly described, their organizations and missions, conversation turned to organizational structure. A few of the organizations were established beyond 5 years, and there was intent discussion about the various ways of assembling staff, volunteer staff and board of directors.

The group also discussed the state of cinema culture in Kansas. Hitting on topics such as how political an organization can be with their programming in a conservative state, and what each organization does to attract, retain, educate and engage audiences who may be unfamiliar with independent cinema. KIFF does an audience Q&A before the festival, to answer questions. Other ideas generated included creating a short film program featuring 'best of' shorts from festivals across the Kansas, which would then travel around the state; and thoughts on how to better support Kansas filmmakers via educational opportunities and filmmaking equipment.

A good deal of time was spent talking about audiences of the future and how best to engage them, via social media (Instagram, twitter), encourage them to volunteer or become brand ambassadors for your sponsors. It was also clear that young people want information immediately, and often make last minute decisions, but are heavily influenced by their peers, and are attracted to free content. By the end of the allotted time, it was clear that organizations had made connections with one another and were very grateful to have the forum to do so. FFA is honored to have played a role in convening these film organizations and will continue to serve as a resource. The event concluded with Film Festival Alliance's signature Meet the Festivals panel, where many of the festival organizers shared their thoughts with Tallgrass' visiting filmmakers.

Next Steps:

- Create a Kansas Film Festival Organizers private Facebook group for the sharing of information
- Work together to create a calendar of film events in the state of Kansas with the assistance of KCAIC
- Create a database of recommended Kansas films (with assistance from festival consultant Jon Gann) & work together to create resource list for Kansas filmmakers
- Begin planning for 2019 meet up scheduled for October during Kansas International Film Festival in Kansas City
- Designate a person to curate the traveling shorts program



Developing A Flourishing Film Festival Workshop
October 19, 2018, Wichita, Kansas

Attendee Feedback

“Yeah for community! I'm very heartened to feel part of this arts community in Kansas. Our motto here at GPT is ‘Together we are more!’ We no longer feel alone. – Margaret Clair, Executive Director, Great Plains Theater (Abilene)

“This was such a wonderful opportunity to connect, put faces to names, and move toward future collaborations. It made the state feel smaller in terms of distance, but more expansive in creativity. Looking forward to connecting with you all in meaningful ways in times ahead!” - Marlo Angell, Festival Director, Free State Festival (Lawrence)

“As a new organization, I feel empowered to ask for help as we create our festival here in El Dorado. Thank you, each of you, for your input and willingness to share your wisdom.” - Deanna Bonn, El Dorado Film Commission (El Dorado)

“Please note: you are all rock stars!!! Thank you so much for sharing your knowledge and experience and dreams with us at KIFF. We left your company so energized. Keep in touch with us. We want to be strategic and official in our ability to support us collectively, and you as cousin festivals. Thank you...for bringing us together. We trust your guidance.” – Lonita Cook, Board Member, Kansas International Film Festival (Kansas City)

“It was wonderful to finally have the opportunity to gather with so many film organizations from around the state in the spirit of true collaboration. There is much momentum and support for independent cinema happening here in Kansas. Working together, we can make an impact, and continue to put Kansas festivals on the national map.” – Shan Jabara, Former Director of Acquisitions/Community Engagement, Tallgrass Film Festival (Wichita)



Developing A Flourishing Film Festival Workshop October 19, 2018, Wichita, Kansas

Friday, October 18, 10:00am-3:30pm, Harvester Arts (215 N. Washington), Wichita, **KS**

Facilitators: Jon Gann (Festival Consultant/Reel Plan); Lela Meadow-Conner, (Film Festival Alliance/Executive Director), Peter Jasso (Kansas Creative Arts Industries Commission)

10:00am: Welcome, Introduction of Film Festival Alliance & Attending Festivals:

We will begin the day by introducing the Film Festival Alliance and the KCAIC, and giving everyone a chance to briefly introduce themselves and their festival's mission, or proposed mission. Each festival will receive an index card on which to write their most pressing issue, which will be discussed at the end of the session.

10:15am: Mission + Organizational Structure: The group will take some time to discuss the importance of film festivals, their missions (how to stay aligned and how to pivot in changing times); as well as what various organizational structures look like and what works and doesn't.

11:00am: Audiences + Cinema Culture: As technology evolves, and audiences change, what are festivals doing (niche marketing, community partnerships, special events, year-round programs, membership or subscription services) to attract new audiences and cultivate a cinema culture for future generations who are not accustomed to traditional movie going. How is this a challenger or a benefit, living in "the middle?"

11:45am: Lunch is served

12:00pm: Index Issues and Next Steps: We will delve into brief conversations surrounding each festival's index card issue, as well as discuss next steps for this gathering of Kansas-festivals and how to enhance this meet-up as an annual event.

1:00pm: Depart for Scottish Rite Theater (332 E. 1st Street)

1:30pm: Meet the Festivals: Film Festival Alliance's signature Meet the Festivals is designed to create an open dialogue that increases the transparency between film festival professionals and filmmakers. Not only can festivals provide valuable insight for filmmakers; filmmakers can provide useful feedback to festivals. Join programmers from Tallgrass and other festivals to discuss the submission and selection process, and to share insights on how festivals can better serve filmmakers. Open to public.

2:30pm: Meet the Filmmakers: Immediately following Meet the Festivals, join the Tallgrass Filmmakers Class of 2018 as well as the Tallgrass programmers. Hosted by the 2018 Filmmaker Advisory Board. Open to the public.

3:30 -5:30pm: Happy Hour in the Tallgrass VIP Lounge or Films

7:30pm: Centerpiece Gala + After Party (Screening Venue: Wichita Orpheum, Party Venue: 115 N. Mead)